



REPORT OF INDEPENDENT AUDITORS



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Report of Independent Auditors

To the Inspector General
U.S. Department of Education

We have audited the accompanying consolidated balance sheets of Federal Student Aid (FSA), a performance-based organization of the U.S. Department of Education (the Department) as of September 30, 2006 and 2005, and the related consolidated statements of net cost, changes in net position, and financing and the combined statements of budgetary resources for the fiscal years then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of FSA's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits.

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States; the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Bulletin No. 06-03, *Audit Requirements for Federal Financial Statements*. Those standards and bulletin require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. We were not engaged to perform an audit of FSA's internal control over financial reporting. Our audit included consideration of internal control over financial reporting as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of FSA's internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, and evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of FSA as of September 30, 2006 and 2005, and its net costs, changes in net position, budgetary resources, and reconciliation of net costs to budgetary obligations for the years then ended, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States.

Our audits were conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the basic financial statements taken as a whole. The information presented in the Management Discussion and Analysis and required supplementary stewardship information is not a required part of the basic financial statements but is supplementary information required by OMB Circular No. A-136, *Financial Reporting Requirements*. We have applied certain limited procedures, which consisted principally of inquiries of management regarding the methods of measurement and presentation of the supplementary information. However, we did not audit the information and express no opinion on it.



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In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our reports dated November 7, 2006, on our consideration of FSA's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws and regulations and other matters. The purpose of those reports is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. Those reports are an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and should be considered in assessing the results of our audits.

Ernst & Young LLP

November 7, 2006